

MATERNAL DEATH RATES BY COUNTY AND RACE

Objective

By 1990, the maternal mortality rate should not exceed five per 100,000 live births for any county or for any ethnic group (e.g., Black, Hispanic, American Indian).

Explanatory Notes

Consists of ICD codes 630-676 of the Ninth Revision and 630-678 of the Eighth Revision. County rates are for the five-year period 1982-86.

Findings

As shown on the next page, thirty-six of the state's 100 counties experienced some maternal mortality in 1986-90. However, 25 of the 36 counties experienced only one death, and six experienced only two. Due to the instability of small numbers, the application of this objective to counties seems ill-advised; thus, county rates have not been calculated.

Both the white and nonwhite rate rose precipitously in 1990, to far exceed the objective. Likewise, neither race achieved the goal on the national level. North Carolina awaits the 1991 data to determine if the high rates are spikes due to the volatility associated with small numbers, or are due to identifiable health risks or health service problems.

Related National Objectives for the Year 2000

- o Reduce the maternal mortality rate to no more than 3.3 per 100,000 live births.
- o Reduce the maternal mortality rate among blacks to no more than five per 100,000 live births.

Data Sources

North Carolina: State Center for Health and Environmental Statistics
United States: National Center for Health Statistics